



Childsplay
Washington Elementary School District
ASU/Arizona Prevention Resource Center
United States Department of Education
Arts in Education 2007-2008
Model Development and Dissemination Grant

Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: The Three Little Javelinas

Lesson Overview/Theme: The focus of this lesson is to use creative drama strategies to explore characters from the story *The Three Little Javelinas* by Susan Lowell. The students will compare this story to the traditional version of *The Three Little Pigs*. The following drama strategies will be used to explore the story with more depth:
Mirror Work in Character
Character Frozen Pictures

This lesson also provides an opportunity to discuss desert animals and habitats, appropriate for the AZ 4th grade social studies curriculum.

Classroom Teacher: WESD 4th Grade Teachers

Teaching Artists: Drew Chappell, Lisé Kloeppel, Barbara Jo Maier, Alison Marshall

Lesson Session (#in unit or sequence): Model One (teaching artist role models this lesson in the classroom with the 4th grade students)

Length of Lesson: 45 minutes

Lesson Plan Author: Patricia Snoyer Black

Instructional Objectives:

Students will:

- Develop a basic understanding of the actor's tools and the use of movement in the development of a character.
- Be able to define and demonstrate the meaning of pantomime.
- Define vocabulary words from the story and the pictures.
- Demonstrate good concentration and physical expression through the mirror activity.
- Explore movement concepts of space, scale, shape, and weight.
- Demonstrate cooperation through successful interaction with their partner in the mirror activity.
- List desert plants and animals.

Arizona Theater Standards:

T04-S1C1-PO 102 Cooperate in the dramatic process

T04-S1C2-PO101 Imagine and describe characters, their relationships, what they want and why through variations of movement and gesture, vocal pitch, volume and tempo

T04-S1C2-PO202 As a character, play out her/his wants by interacting with others, maintaining concentration and contributing to the action of classroom improvisations

Arizona Language Arts Standards

W04-S2C1-03 Ideas and Content: use relevant details to provide adequate support for the ideas.

W04-S2C4-03 Word Choice: apply vocabulary and/or terminology appropriate to the type of writing

Arizona Social Studies Standards

SS04-S4C2-PO1 Geography Places and Regions: Describe how the Southwest has distinct physical and cultural characteristics

SS04-S4C2-PO4 Compare the landform regions of Arizona according to their physical features, plants and animals



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Instructional Plan

Introduction:

Topic introduction, review of previously learned material, lesson connections, generating interest

Teaching Artist introduction: this is the first visit of the teaching artist to this classroom so the artist will spend a little time introducing the students to creative drama, the tools an actor uses and establishing what will be happening throughout the year in their classroom.

Read the story *The Three Little Javelinas* paying particular attention to the pictures. Ask students to review the plot of the traditional version of "The Three Little Pigs". Explain to the students that the following activities will allow them to get a better understanding of the story, the setting and the characters.

Setting the Stage (Warm Up):

Explanation (say), Modeling (see), Structured Practice (making the work)

Drama Strategy: Mirrors (T04-S1C1-PO 102)

Begin by introducing the basic procedures for doing the Mirror exercise. The purpose of the Mirror exercise is to "help players see with the full body; to reflect the other" (Spolin, pg.75). Try the generic version of mirrors first: ask students to get into pairs. One player becomes A the other B. All teams play simultaneously. A faces B. Explain that B is a person looking in a mirror. A is that person's image in the mirror. A reflects all movements initiated by B, head to foot, including facial expressions. After a time, positions are reversed so that B reflects A. This exercise should be done nonverbally with partners maintaining eye contact for best concentration.

Sidecoaching suggestions: "This activity is nonverbal- no speaking please" "Use more than your arms: stretch, bend and explore different levels of space" "Leaders, if your mirror is having trouble keeping up with you then slow down and control your movements" "Make movement choices that your mirror image is also capable of doing"

Define Pantomime: Depending on the students' level of experience you may wish to define pantomime first before beginning the Character Mirrors activity. Ask your students to define pantomime (A scene or play without words. The actors use only action and gesture to express their meaning.)

Sidecoaching

"Let your actions make it clear the specific piece of clothing you are putting on" "Remember details: does it have snaps or buttons?" "How does the clothing move? Is there fringe or other moving parts?" "Is it easy to put on or difficult?" "Let your expressions show how you feel while wearing it".

Sequence of Specific Activities:

Drama Strategy: Mirror Variation- Character Mirrors

As a whole group, ask the students to analyze the first full-page picture in the book (the same picture is on the cover) of the three javelinas as they set out to seek their fortunes. Ask students to describe and list in detail, all of the specific clothing choices worn by each javelina. (W04-S2C1-03) Vocabulary: define terms such as "chaps", "spurs", "kerchiefs", and "sombrero". (W04-S2C4-03) Ask the students to describe any insights they might have about each individual character by the clothing they have chosen to wear. (T04-S1C2-PO204) Repeat the mirror game as described above only this time have each leader choose to be one of the javelina characters. Ask them to use the mirror as they put on, in pantomime, various western clothing pieces previously discussed. (T04-S1C2-PO101)



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Drama Strategy: Character Frozen Pictures (T04-S1C2-PO202)

Following the character mirror exercise, ask the students to find their own space in the room and to work individually. Now that they have "tried on" a javelina character, tell them that you would like to use those characters in a series of frozen pictures that capture moments from the story. Tell them to remember all of the different clothing pieces they have just experimented with in pantomime and to let that clothing influence the way that they move and stand.

Ask them to stand in neutral to begin. The teacher will use a 3 count to ask them to transform from themselves into the frozen picture.

Suggestion for frozen pictures:

Create a picture of your javelina....

- Walking in the very hot sun on the way to seek his/her fortune
- Building a house out of tumbleweeds or saguaro ribs
- Relaxing happily in his/her new house
- Running away from the house as it is being blown down
- Standing sheepishly at your sister's front door asking to be let in
- Hiding under the rug as the coyote tries to get into the adobe house
- Peeking out the window as the coyote runs ways for good

During this process you might want to use the stop action technique to let students look at and do an instant analysis of, other students' physical choices and facial expressions.

Stop Action Technique:

Occasionally freeze the improvisation to focus in on an individual. (you may use whatever control device works best; flashing the lights, ringing a bell or shaking a tambourine, etc) Tell them to maintain their pose as we observe and analyze it. Use this opportunity to reflect on what physical choices and facial expressions tell us about a character. Allow a couple of different students to share each time you stop.

Closure:

Once the students have returned to their seats, review the work they have done together this day. Ask them to think about the 4 main characters in the story; the three javelinas and the coyote. Discuss the differences they notice to the story now that it is placed in the Southwest.



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Assessment:

- Ask the students to define pantomime and give examples of its use in today's lesson. Ask them to describe things that might cause pantomime actions to be unclear or confusing.
- Ask students to describe effective examples of scale, shape, weight demonstrated by their classmates in the mirror games.
- Ask them to give examples of when they worked cooperatively. Review challenges to successful cooperation.
- Ask students to list different tools actors use when creating a character [physical action, voice, intention, and clothing/costume]. Review which skill were used in today's lesson.
- Ask students to define all new vocabulary words from the book and today's lesson.
Potential vocabulary words: chaps, kerchief, spurs, suspenders, sombrero, saguaro, adobe, tumbleweed, javelina, whirlwind, rattlesnake, quail, palo verde tree, stove pipe, chile

Writing Extensions:

As one of the javelinas or the coyote, write a statement explaining what you want to do for a job or a career. Explain why this job interests you and why you think you would be good in this job. (voice)

Different Perspectives: Write a paragraph in the first person, from the Coyote's point of view, describing his plans to get into the third house now that the first two attempts to catch a javelina haven't worked. [review the two approaches described in the book- that he was old and weak and wouldn't really pose any threat and trying to slide down the chimney]. What other attempts might he try to get the three Javelinas to come out of the house or to get himself inside? (writing application concept 3-functional) (Voice)

As a javelina, write a letter to Coyote trying to persuade him to not blow down your house. What bartering might you do? What tactics might you try to talk him out of his goal? (writing application concept 4-persuasive)(organization)

Imagine the three javelinas have moved into a new neighborhood that is creating a Home Owners Association. The javelinas have been asked to write the home owners guidelines for building and maintaining the homes in the neighborhood. This document should include rules and regulations, etc. (writing application concept 3-functional/technical) (Ideas and Content)

Other Extensions: (Social Studies- Science)

Introduce the topic of desert animals. Students are asked to list animals that live in the desert.
Discuss the differences between pigs and javelinas and wolves and coyotes.
Review the different materials and their origins, used to build the houses in the story.

Sources:

Spolin, Viola. Theatre Games for the Classroom: A Teacher's Handbook. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1986.

Heinig, Ruth. Improvisation with Favorite Tales: Integrating Drama into the Reading/ Writing Classroom. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1992.